

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EA-06 IO-10 ISO-00 FEA-01 AGR-05 CEA-01

CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00 FRB-03 H-01 INR-07 INT-05

L-02 LAB-04 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 AID-05 CIEP-01 SS-15

STR-01 TAR-01 TRSE-00 USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 OMB-01

OIC-02 AF-06 ARA-06 EUR-12 NEA-09 /127 W

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R 061249Z MAR 75

FM USDEL MTN GENEVA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 004

INFO AMMBASSY MANILA 213

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRD, GATT

SUBJECT: MTN: CONSULTATION WITH PHILIPPINE DELEGATION

REF: GENEVA 1392

1. SUMMARY. PHILIPPINE DELEGATION MET WITH U.S. MTN DELEGATION TO CONVEY SERIES OF QUESTIONS ON TRADE ACT PROVISIONS AND PROCEDURES, TO DELIVER TO U.S. DEL A REQUEST LIST FOR U.S. DUTY ELIMINATION ON SEVERAL TROPICAL PRODUCTS, AND TO EXCHANGE VIEWS PRIMARILY ON WORK OF TROPICAL PRODUCTS GROUP. END SUMMARY

2. AT REQUEST PHILIPPINE DELEGATION, U.S. MTN DELEGATION MET WITH PHILIPPINE AMBASSADOR VEGA AND SEVEN OTHER MEMBERS PHILIPPINE DELEGATION (INCLUDING ROBERTO GARCIA OF CENTRAL BANK AND ROMERO ARGUELLES OF PHILIPPINE EMBASSY WASHINGTON) ON FEBRUARY 27 TO DISCUSS SEVERAL MTN ISSUES. PHILIPPINE DELEGATION IS HOLDING SERIES OF SIMILAR CONSULTATIONS ARRANGED THROUGH GATT SECRETARIAT WITH OTHER

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INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES. PRIMARY TOPICS WERE U.S.

TRADE ACT AND PHILIPPINE MTN PRIORITIES FOR TROPICAL PRODUCTS.

3. PHILIPPINE DEL ASKED SERIES OF QUESTIONS ON SPECIFIC PROVISIONS OF TRADE ACT, WHICH IT WILL BE TRANSMITTING IN WRITTEN FORM WITH REQUEST FOR WRITTEN RESPONSE. (ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS SUBSEQUENT TO MEETING MEMBERS OF PHILIPPINE DEL HAVE STATED THAT WRITTEN QUESTIONS TO BE AVAILABLE VERY SOON. MTN DEL WILL CABLE QUESTIONS AS SOON AS RECEIVED FOR WRITTEN RESPONSE FROM WASHINGTON.)

4. AMB. VEGA ALSO HANDED NOTE (TEXT SENT REFTTEL) TO U.S. DEL CONTAINING REQUEST THAT U.S., IN MTN CONTEXT, ELIMINATE DUTIES ON SEVERAL SPECIFIC TROPICAL PRODUCTS OF MAJOR EXPORT INTEREST TO PHILIPPINES. AMB VEGA STATED ALL OF THE PRODUCTS MENTIONED WERE UNQUESTIONABLY TROPICAL PRODUCTS "EVEN WITHIN THE MEANING OF YOUR TRADE ACT;" ALL OF THE ITEMS INVOLVED DUTIES OF 5 PERCENT OR BELOW, AND COULD THEREFORE BE REDUCED TO ZERO UNDER THE TRADE ACT; AND THAT THE PHILIPPINES WOULD BE REQUESTING "EX OUTS" ON CERTAIN PRODUCTS, RECOGNIZING THAT THIS WAS POSSIBLE UNDER THE TRADE ACT AUTHORITY, IN ORDER TO CREATE ZERO DUTY POSITIONS IN THE U.S. TARIFF FOR THOSE ITEMS.

5. AMB VEGA ALSO INQUIRED AS TO CURRENT U.S. VIEWS ON GENERAL QUESTION OF COMMODITY AGREEMENTS, AS WELL AS HOW WE THOUGHT NEGOTIATIONS SHOULD PROCEED IN TROPICAL PRODUCTS GROUP THIS YEAR. (PHILIPPINE DEL WAS SATISFIED FOR MOMENT WITH GATT SECRETARIAT DRAFT NOTE ON TROPICAL PRODUCTS PROCEDURES. ASEAN GROUP MET LATER THAT DAY TO CONSIDER HOW TO PROCEED ON TROPICAL PRODUCTS AND WAS TO EXAMINE THE POSSIBILITY OF A CONSOLIDATED ASEAN REQUEST LIST.) AMB VEGA STATED PHILIPPINE MAIN INTEREST IN MTN IS IN TROPICAL PRODUCTS GROUP, ALTHOUGH HIS DELEGATION WAS ALSO GATHERING INFORMATION LEADING TO REQUESTS ON NON-TARIFF BARRIERS. PHILIPPINES NOT YET DECIDED IN WHICH TNC GROUP TO PRESENT NTB REQUESTS.

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6. GENERALIZED PREFERENCES: PHILIPPINE DEL INDICATED IT WAS PREPARING A GSP REQUEST LIST HERE AND WOULD BE ASKING FOR MANILA CLEARANCE SHORTLY. (WE COMMENTED THAT SUCH A REQUEST LIST SHOULD BE SUBMITTED IN WASHINGTON FOR MAXIMUM USEFULNESS.) AMB VEGA INDICATED HIS UNDERSTANDING THAT U.S. ALREADY HAD PREPARED A GSP PRODUCT LIST FOR INTERNATIONAL TRADE COMMISSION CONSIDERATION, AND HE THOUGHT IT WOULD BE MOST HELPFUL IF

HIS DELEGATION WERE GIVEN SOME IDEA OF THE PRODUCT
COVERAGE OF THAT LIST. HE INDICATED THAT HIS DELEGA-
TION WOULD APPRECIATE FURTHER CONSULTATIONS WITH U.S.
OVER THE NEXT SEVERAL WEEKS, IN PARTICULAR JUST PRIOR
TO THE TROPICAL PRODUCTS MEETING, AND WOULD LIKE TO GET
U.S. REACTIONS TO PHILIPPINE GSP REQUEST LIST AS SOON
AS THEY CAN PRODUCE IT.

7. ACTION REQUESTED:

U.S. DEL TO MTN TROPICAL PRODUCTS GROUP SHOULD
BE PREPARED DISCUSS PHILIPPINE NOTE WITH AMB VEGA DURING
WEEK GROUP MEETS (MARCH 11-14). WOLFF

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TRADE AGREEMENTS, MEETING DELEGATIONS, NEGOTIATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 06 MAR 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: greeneet
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975MTNGE01527
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750079-0394
From: MTN GENEVA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750376/aaaacqto.tel
Line Count: 128
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EB
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 GENEVA 1392
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: greeneet
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 26 JUN 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <26 JUN 2003 by WorrelSW>; APPROVED <30 OCT 2003 by greeneet>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MTN: CONSULTATION WITH PHILIPPINE DELEGATION
TAGS: ETRD, GATT
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006